

Pastor Regrets Hosting Hate Group

By Richard Bell

Pastor Scott Anderson of the Marine Drive Pentecostal Church in Head of Jeddore does not mince words about his failure to check out the positions of the white Christian nationalist hate group, Action4Canada, who appeared at his church on the evening of August 2, 2023.

Anderson phoned the *Cooperator* on the morning after this event to talk about how upset he was by Action4Canada founder Tanya Gaw’s talk the night before. “I dropped the ball,” Anderson said, explaining his failure to do a more careful review of the group before agreeing to have the group speak at the church. “I’m not going to pass the buck now. There were multiple things that bothered me about her talk,” including her rejection of Muslims, Sikhs, and people from other non-Christian faiths, her whitewashing of Canada’s treatment of indigenous peoples, and her virulent hostility to people in the 2SLGBTQ+ community.

In a phone interview on August 18, Anderson reviewed what had happened since Gaw’s talk. At the church service the following weekend, “I outlined everything that was wrong with Tanya Gaw’s presentation that night. The congregation was very supportive, they understood what happened, and were glad that I took ownership for my mistake in inviting her in.”

Anderson was angry about Gaw running a political event in his church. “They

spewed venom, left rubble, and walked away and harmed our church community. I told them not to come back, and asked them to stop what they were doing and reassess things. They were supposed to get back to me, but they haven’t.”

At a personal level, Anderson said the experience was “a wake-up call to many things about the right. I’m not a nationalist—I believe as Canadians we are citizens in a multicultural country, and we have to show respect for the values of others. It was a horrible moment in my life, but I’m feeling better now because I really took ownership of my mistake.”

As for the redeeming possibilities from this encounter, Anderson says, “I feel doors are opening, that’s what’s been happening. My concern is for other people in Christian circles. We need to run from nationalism, keep our focus on Kingdom, uphold the multicultural values of inclusion and diversity. And If we feel that some of our rights as Christians are being threatened, we need to sit down and discuss what’s happening, not polarize things.”

“My wife and I have had a wonderful sit-down talk with someone who’s involved in Eastern Shore Pride, and we’ll get together again. I’ve already spoken with most of my fellow pastors. We’ve got a local ministerial meeting coming up in September, and I know we’ll be talking about Action4Canada there.”

What Is Action4Canada?

If Anderson had checked, he would quickly have discovered that the Canadian Anti-Hate Network characterized Action4Canada as “a broad Christian nationalist organization with chapters across the country, [that] lends its voice to a variety of social issues, often using overtly racist and homophobic rhetoric in the process while endorsing a number of conspiracy theories.” (The Government of Canada’s Anti-Racism Action Program funded the 2022 launch of the Canadian Anti-Hate Network’s toolkit, “Confronting and Preventing Hate in Canadian Schools.”)

The organization has been growing rapidly since its incorporation on August 15, 2019. According to its annual reports filed with Corporations Canada, in August 2020, the organization reported current year earnings of \$18,334.34. In August 2021, total income had soared to \$227,881.93. And in August 2022, they reported total income of \$790,446.34. The Action4Canada website reports the group now has almost 100 chapters, with 31 in BC, 12 in Alberta, 34 in Ontario, and 6 in Nova Scotia. Gaw’s talk was on a tour that included 7 talks in Ontario, 3 talks in New Brunswick, and 5 in Nova Scotia.

Anderson was not the first official in Atlantic Canada to be unpleasantly surprised by the content of Tanya Gaw’s presentation. Gaw spoke in New Maryland, New Brunswick on July 31. New Maryland Mayor Judy Wilson-Shee told the CBC News afterwards that the

town tried to cancel the event once they learned about Action4Canada’s agenda: “There’s too much going on in this world today. We don’t need people coming into our beautiful community and spreading that word of hate. We want to make sure that our people are safe in our community.”

When Eastern Shore Pride learned of Action4Canada’s planned August 2 appearance at the Marine Drive Pentecostal Church, chair Brenda Hattie put out a call for people to gather to express their concerns about the appearance of this hate group. “We know that Action4Canada does not represent our community,” Hattie said in a press statement. “We are looking forward to sending a strong message that their views are not welcome in Nova Scotia.” Hattie said that the event would be celebrating “love, inclusion, and diversity.” Several dozen people lined both sides of the highway in front of the church carrying pride flags and signs.

Conspiracies Galore

Gaw spoke for the better part of three hours, throwing out one right-wing conspiracy theory after another. She repeatedly cited the United Nations and the World Economic Forum as the lead organizations in a global conspiracy to take away the rights of all the world’s citizens and reduce us all to slaves. Gays, trans, and drag queens were engaged in massive plots to “groom” the country’s

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The Language of Flowers

By Savayda Jarone, Herbalist

Summer is the season of flowers, bringing a steady parade of different blooms, whether they be wildflowers of the meadows and roadsides, or cultivated ornamentals decorating our home gardens and community spaces. The annual return of flowers is one of the simple delights of summer.


Flowers have a broad appeal, whether it be for art, decoration, science, gardening, economics, medicine, or spirituality; they are interwoven into the history and lore of most cultures and geographic regions, providing societal symbology and meaning. Some flowers hold meaning on a global scale, such as the rose, while others have regional significance such as the tulip in the Netherlands, the lotus in India, or the mayflower here in Nova Scotia.


Flowers have a language, known as Floriography, which conveys sentiment when words fall short. Flowers are gifted, on any occasion, for more than just their beauty, but for their symbolic meaning. Roses take the lead, with each hue comes a different connotation. Each spring I would present my grandmother with

daffodils, reflecting their connection to survival and hope; speaking directly to her experience overcoming breast cancer.


Beyond the larger meanings associated with flowers, we may have our own deeply held, personal connection to flowers based on the memories and feelings stemming from our experience with them. If you ask five people about daisies, you will likely get five different stories that reflect their unique relationship with them.


I have selected a few flowers of late summer, currently in bloom in our region, to give a glimpse into their symbolic meaning.


 **Sunflower** – Standing tall and bright, they remind us to be authentic and remain true to oneself.


 **Daisy** – Innocence, rebirth after loss. The Irish Celts believed that children who died would come back as daisies.

An iconic love language, epitomized by the act of plucking petals while murmuring “loves me, loves me not.”

 **Hydrangea** – A bringer of change, unpredictability, adaptability. Hydrangea changes colour based on the pH level of the soil; high acidity = blue, purple, low acidity = pink, red

 **Day Lily** – With their fleeting blooms, they remind us to seize the moment to express oneself.

 **Clover** – Good luck, protection against misfortune.

 **Pansy** – When presented upright, they convey thoughtfulness and affection, when presented upside down, the opposite is true.

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Wonderful Words and Book Clubs

By Dee Dwyer

“As every reader knows, the social contract between you and a book you love is not complete until you can hand that book to someone else and say ‘Here, you’re going to love this.’ I always thought that sharing the books I loved with my students, requiring them to read those books, was the biggest perk of being a teacher.” So writes Ann Patchett in her book of essays, *In These Precious Days*, (“A Talk to the Association,” pp. 267-268) I read and discussed this book recently in one of my two wonderful book clubs.

I am a self-confessed booklover, a former bookseller who worked at three bookstores in Halifax – A Pair of Trindles on the Halifax waterfront, Classics Books in Scotia Square, and Entitlement on Spring Garden Road. I am, no surprise, an avid reader of almost every genre. Growing up, I read the dictionary and my younger sister used to laugh at me and think me weird. I love words, the sound of words, and I play with words.

My reading the dictionary has sometimes helped me win Scrabble points and my love of books, words, and writing has led to a career as a poet, writer, and teacher. I’ve written three books of poetry and some non-fiction about my time living in Japan. My career has led to many adventures in the mountains at Banff, Alberta. In 1982, 1984, and again in 1995, I studied at the Banff School of Fine Arts with W.O. Mitchell, famous for his classic, *Who Has Seen the Wind*. Rooms there were full of writers “freefalling” while watching the elk outside our windows. “Freefall” is Mitchell’s messy method of finding new material and the words that grab us and have us telling a story with emotion, tension, and underlying questions.

I am a member of two interesting Book Clubs. One takes place at the Musquodoboit Harbour Public

Library on the second Wednesday of each month at 1 pm to about 2:30 pm. The number varies as to who attends, and I like it like that – the surprise of who will show up. We met last on 14 June to discuss the novel *If This Is Freedom* by the Halifax author and poet Gloria Ann Wesley. Set in Birchtown in the Shelburne area, it is about the struggles and hardships of the Black Loyalist settlers.

At some point in our reading, we choose our titles from the book club kits the library provides. The library sets up the reading schedule and offers the monthly selection. The kit comes with questions about plot, the characters, setting, and themes in the books. We discuss these and other topics, sometimes getting happily sidetracked by personal concerns, news of the world, and how these all intersect and connect.

That is what I love about my Book Clubs: everything connects and affects us all. The butterfly’s wings fluttering in China eventually creates a breeze in Musquodoboit Harbour. The lives of others affects us all – especially if we want it to. Books are about connection, the social contract between the reader and writer, and the contract between the people that gather to enjoy books. Sometimes we may not enjoy the book and that’s OK too.

My second Book Club meets on the last Wednesday of each month but take the summer off. This group has no structured questions, and we choose books by their availability in the library system, trying to make insure that there are enough copies for all. In June we discussed the book of essays by Ann Patchett, from which I quoted above. Now I’ll come full circle and quote from the last page of *These Precious Days*. “Let’s keep doing this,” she says. “Let’s do this forever.”

...Flowers Continued

As we bask in these last warm weeks of summer and enjoy these blooms, consider the stories they tell – both collectively and individually through our personal experiences. Flowers have a way of communicating emotions and connecting us to the past, making the world of nature a rich source of inspiration and reflection.

Join me on September 21st for an evening of stories around the campfire to celebrate the fall equinox and the language of flowers. Bring your own tales to tell. Donations accepted, with half of the proceeds going to the *Cooperator*, the teller of stories of the eastern shore. Details are on the calendar page of my website: www.bloominstitute.ca

...Pastor Regrets Continued

children through sex education in schools.

Covid was “a fraud.” In fact, she claimed that all vaccines were useless or worse: “When they introduced childhood vaccines, there was measles, mumps, but it had already leveled off way down, it was almost at zero. And it was because sanitation, clean drinking water, healthy food. Everything had changed. So really, it wasn’t even necessary back then. But some very wise parents decided that natural immunity, what God gave us, was best. I think that if God wanted us with needles in our arms, he would have maybe planned that when the earth began, but it didn’t.”

Anderson told the *Cooperator* that he was especially disturbed by the harshness of Gaw’s treatment of people she disagreed with, for the “lack of grace” with which she treated sensitive topics like trans people.

“Basically I just felt the perspective wasn’t that right. It was harsh, and it wasn’t the perspective that Jesus models. We need to move away from the polarized, no-dialogue situation to one where people say, ‘All right, I don’t have to agree with you, but I’m going to listen to you, and you’re going to listen to me.’ That doesn’t mean we’ll end up agreeing 100%. But we need to know that we can’t do this thing where we’re demonizing people that we don’t talk to. Not talking to each other is dangerous.”

Your Health, Your Community News from Nova Scotia Health

Supporting the grief journey: free upcoming sessions and memorial service to offer comfort, healing.

Many people find comfort in knowing that they are not alone in their grief. Nova Scotia Health is providing several opportunities to come together in a supportive environment to explore the grief experience.

Grief Support Sessions

Three free grief support sessions will take place at Musquodoboit Harbour Public Library and are open to anyone over the age of 18 who is experiencing grief associated with the death of a person in their life. Participants can register for one, two or all three sessions. Dates and times are listed below.

The group facilitators are Jocelyne Tranquilla, a bereavement coordinator with Nova Scotia Health’s Palliative Care Service and Katie Simms, a health care social worker. To register, please contact Katie at 902-889-4103 or katie.simms@nshealth.ca

Grief Literacy – Learning about this Wild Ride
Thursday, September 21, 2023, 12:30-2:30 p.m.

Grief & the Power of Creativity
Thursday, October 19, 2023, 10 a.m.- 12 p.m.

Living with Grief during the Holiday Season
Thursday, November 16, 2023, 12:30-2:30 p.m.

Palliative Care and Nephrology Memorial Service

In Nova Scotia Health’s Central Zone, both the palliative care and the nephrology services have long held memorial services for friends and family, but the events have been on hold since the beginning of the COVID pandemic.

On September 18, 2023, palliative care and nephrology will host a memorial service together at a larger venue to accommodate all who may wish to attend.

The event will take place at Halifax Central Library’s Paul O’Regan Hall from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. The library is located at 5440 Spring Garden Rd in Halifax.

Family and friends of those who were served by the palliative care or nephrology service are welcome to attend the memorial, which will include music, words of support and encouragement and an opportunity to grieve and remember publicly and collectively.

Family members are asked to bring a photo of their loved one to be displayed during the event if they wish to share one. Photos will be returned following the service.

“Memorial services provide an opportunity for family, friends and staff to come together and remember those who we have cared for,” said Tranquilla. “It is an opportunity to collectively support grief in our community.”

Family members, friends and staff are asked to register for the service in advance by calling Krista at 902-220-4398 or emailing czbereavement@nshealth.ca

DISPOSE OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD SPECIAL WASTE PROPERLY

Bring your unwanted household special waste to one of the depots below to be disposed of by experts:

Saturday, September 9

Musquodoboit Rural High School
11980 NS-224, Middle Musquodoboit

Saturday, September 16

Eastern Shore Community Centre
67 Park Rd, Musquodoboit Harbour



BATTERY ACIDS
DRAIN CLEANERS
OVEN CLEANERS



PESTICIDES
RAT POISON
CLEANING FLUIDS



FURNITURE POLISH
OVEN CLEANERS
AEROSOLS



GASOLINE
BBQ STARTER
OILS/SOLVENTS

WE ACCEPT

- Paint* (*including empty paint cans*)
- Used motor oil
- Paint thinners
- Gasoline
- Transmission fluid
- Pesticides
- Antifreeze
- Wood preservatives
- Herbicides
- Drain cleaners
- Paint strippers
- Metal polish
- Rust removers
- Oven cleaners
- Batteries
- Degreasers
- Pharmaceuticals
- Furniture polish and wax
- Pool chemicals
- BBQ propane tanks
- More items with hazardous symbols

**Household paint also accepted at Enviro-Depots*

WE WILL NOT ACCEPT

- Materials containing PCB's (polychlorinated biphenyls)
- Bio-medical waste
- Asbestos
- Radioactive waste
- Unidentified compressed gas cylinders
- Explosives including ammunition
- Unidentifiable material
- Commercial, industrial or institutional waste

Depot operates **9 a.m. to 4 p.m.**, rain or shine.

For more information **call 311** or visit **halifax.ca/hswdepot**

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